

EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

PUBLIC AFFAIRS SECTION

TEL: 880-2-883-7150-4

FAX: 880-2-9881677, 9885688

E-MAIL: DhakaPA@state.gov

WEBSITE: <http://dhaka.usembassy.gov>



PRESS RELEASE

**U.S. GOVERNMENT TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL \$77.5
MILLION IN CYCLONE SIDR RELIEF ASSISTANCE TO
BANGLADESH IN 2008-9**

DHAKA, JULY 2 -- The U.S. Mission in Dhaka is pleased to announce that President Bush signed into law a supplemental funding bill for the U.S. Government that includes \$25 million in cyclone recovery and rehabilitation relief for Bangladesh for 2008, with an additional \$50 million available for 2009. In addition, the U.S. Department of Defense will provide \$2.5 million in 2008 for assistance to support disaster relief in Bangladesh.

With the announcement of this new funding, the U.S. Mission will identify projects and partners to continue efforts to help Bangladesh respond to the aftermath of the devastation caused by Cyclone Sidr in 2007. This assistance will focus on supporting livelihoods and stimulating economic recovery, strengthening local governments in affected areas, and involving local communities in protecting vital habitats while still allowing sustainable use of the forest as an economic asset. Funds also will help provide nutrition for children and mothers in the cyclone-affected region and support the planning and construction of cyclone shelters in areas where they are most needed. These structures will serve as schools and community centers when not needed for emergencies. In addition, the Department of Defense funds will be used to construct multi-purpose shelters and bridges.

The United States Government remains committed to assisting the Government of Bangladesh and its people. The message of the U.S. Government to the people of Bangladesh is a simple one: We were here before the cyclone; we were here during the initial emergency relief phase; and we will be here to help Bangladesh move forward. The United States Government has provided more than \$5 billion in development assistance to Bangladesh since independence. Immediately after Cyclone Sidr, the United States provided \$ 6.5 million for non-food emergency relief activities. In 2008 the United States also is providing an additional \$110 million in food aid that is being used for emergency relief, rehabilitation, and sustainable development in poor and vulnerable villages in the char, haor, and Cyclone Sidr-affected regions. This continuing assistance reflects the U.S. commitment to helping build a brighter tomorrow for Bangladesh's most vulnerable citizens.

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Note: *A Bangla translation of this press release is also available at the American Center. If you are interested in the translation, please call the American Center Press Section, Tel: 8837150-4, Fax: 9885688; e-mail: DhakaPA@state.gov; Website: [http:// dhaka.usembassy.gov](http://dhaka.usembassy.gov)*